

DELL
A DELL COMPANY

10¢

THE *Lone Ranger's* FAMOUS HORSE

No. 393

HI-YO

SILVER

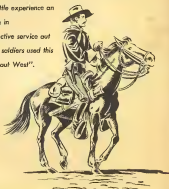




the McClellan Saddle

*The McClellan saddle was invented during
the American Civil War. It was designed so
that a heavily-armed cavalry trooper could
keep a good "seat" very easily and
still swing a sabre and use a large bore rifle.*

*Since the Union cavalry used vast numbers of raw
recruits, who had very little experience on
horseback, the new saddle was invaluable in
getting the most active service out
of them. After the war, many soldiers used this
saddle in their long trip "out West".*



FROST SPARKLES ON THE CANVAS TOPS OF THE WAGON TRAIN, AS THE RISING SUN PEELS THROUGH THE MORNING MIST...

SILVER AND THE MAD STALLION



THE LOVE RANGERS! OH—PERHAPS YOU CAN HELP US!

WHAT'S THE MATTER, JEANNE? CAN'T YOU AND LONNY BREAK THE ICE TO FILL YOUR BUCKETS?



WE HAVEN'T A STICK OR ANYTHING TO BREAK IT WITH!

YOU WON'T NEED ANYTHING NOW! SILVER IS AN OLD HAND AT THIS... JUST GIVE ME YOUR BUCKET!



BREAK A BIG HOLE, SILVER BOY! REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME YOU STRUCK THIN ICE?



HERE YOU ARE, LONNY! ALL YOU CAN CARRY—

WHAT WAS THE FIRST TIME SILVER EVER BROKE ICE? IS THERE A STORY BEHIND IT?

A STORY! PLEASE—THERE'S TIME TO TELL US BEFORE BREAKFAST!

WELL---IT HAPPENED WHEN SILVER WAS AROUND SIX MONTHS OLD... A COLD SNIP JUST LIKE THIS HAD HIT WILD HORSE VALLEY.



IT WAS THE FIRST SHARP COLD THE SPRING COLTS HAD KNOWN--- IT FILLED THEM SO FULL OF LIFE AND ZIP THAT THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THEMSELVES.



"SILVER'S BIG DISAPPOINTMENT CAME WHEN HE TRIED TO DRINK AT THE FROZEN CREEK! HE BRUISED HIS LIP!"



"AS USUAL, WHEN ANYTHING WENT WRONG, HE CALLED FOR MOUSSA, HIS MOTHER."



"THE WATER SPLASHED UP FROM MOUSSA'S POUNDING HOOF AND SCARED HIM."



"BUT WHEN HE SAW HIS MOTHER DRINKING, HE FOUND COURAGE TO FOLLOW SUIT! NATURE, YOU SEE, HAS MADE WILD COLTS SCARY OF EVERYTHING THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND--- AND THAT SAVES THEIR LIVES SOMETIMES."



A detailed illustration of a brown bear cub standing at the edge of a stream, leaning down to drink. The cub is shown in profile, facing left. The stream is a simple line representing water. The background consists of green foliage and trees, suggesting a forest environment. The style is that of a classic children's book illustration.

NONE SAW THE LEAN, BLACK STALLION MOVING CAUTIOUSLY BEHIND THE SCREEN OF YOUNG TREES.



FROM TIME TO TIME HE HALTED TO SNIFF THE BREEZE— MAKING SURE THAT ITS DIRECTION WOULD NOT BETRAY HIS PRESENCE! HIS EYE WAS WILD—HIS COAT ROUGH— HIS MOTIONS JERRY.



MAKING SURE THAT THE HERD LEADER WAS NOT IN SIGHT, THE BLACK STEPPED OUT OF COVER— CLOSE ENOUGH TO STARTLE THE GRAZING MARES. THEY WERE MORE CURIOUS THAN SCARED, HOWEVER.



UNTIL THE SHIFTING WIND BROUGHT THE STRANGER'S SCENT! THEN A HORRID FEAR SEEMED TO LOOSEN THEIR JOINTS!



IT WAS THE SCENT OF A BRAIN-SICK KILLER! EVEN LITTLE SILVER KNEW IT INSTINCTIVELY— AND TREMBLED SO HARD HE COULD SCARCELY STAND.



THE BLACK MOVED TOWARD HIS PETRIFIED AUDIENCE! HE KNEW THEIR FEAR— AND TOOK A FIERCISH PLEASURE IN IT.



"A MAD STALLION HAS BUT ONE DESIRE--- TO KILL, TO DESTROY! HE HAS NO FEAR, AND HIS STRENGTH IS THE STRENGTH OF MADNESS!"



"SUDDENLY THE MARES BROKE AND FLED, WITH THEIR COLTS BESIDE THEM."



"A CLUMP OF STIFF BUSHES LOOMED UP IN FRONT OF SILVER! HE CROGGED TO ONE SIDE--- MOUSSA WENT TO THE OTHER."



"BOUNCING THE CLUMP, HE FOULDED THE BLACK FURY NEARER THAN HIS MOTHER--- IN FACT, RIGHT ON HIS HEELS!"



"WITH A SHRILL SCREAM OF PANIC, HE RAN BLINDLY, DESPERATELY, CARELESS OF DIRECTION. THE BLACK WAS AFTER HIM!"



"THE FROZEN CREEK WAS IN FRONT OF HIM--- BUT THERE WAS NO TIME TO TURN ASIDE!"



STRAIGHT OUT HE LERPT--- WITH ALL HIS STRENGTH.



THE THIN ICE BENT AND CRACKED, BUT DID NOT PUNCH THROUGH AS THE COLT'S LIGHT WEIGHT STRUCK IT.



"HIS LEGS SHOT FROM UNDER HIM! LIKE A TOBACCAN, HE WHIZZED ACROSS THE CREEK."



"BEHIND THE KILLER BRACED, BUT COULD NOT CHECK HIMSELF IN TIME."



"WITH A CRASH AND A SPLASH, THE THIN ICE GAVE WAY."



"BAWLING, SCREAMING, THRASHING, THE MAD HORSE ROSE ON HIS WIND LEGS."



"WITH THE MUDDY BOTTOM GRIPPING AT HIS FEET, HE HURLED HIMSELF ASHORE! THE MAD ANGER IN HIM WAS LIKE A LIVING FLAME, LONGING TO KILL THE FIRST THING HE SAW."



"THE MAD STALLION HAD REACHED SOLID FOOTING ..."

"AND THE NEXT WAS---SYLVAN, THE WILD HORSE KING? WARNED BY HIS MARES, HE CAME THUNDERING DOWN THE CREEK---TRUMPETING HIS CHALLENGE TO THE DESTROYER."



"... AND SYLVAN SCORED THE FIRST BLOW."



"THE BLACK STRANGER HAD LOST NONE OF HIS FIGHTING SKILL, DESPITE HIS CRAZED BRAIN--HIS TEETH BARELY MISSED THE KING'S THROAT, AND DROVE HARD AGAINST THE WHITE SHOULDER."



"HE WHEELED---AND SYLVAN'S RIBS BOOMED LIKE A DRUM, AS THE BLACK'S HEELS STRUCK."



"HEAD LOW, SEEKING SYLVAN'S SLIM FORE-
LEGS WITH JAWS THAT COULD CRUSH BONE
AT ONE SNAP, THE STRANGER BORED IN."



"BUT SYLVAN HAD NOT WON HIS KINGSHIP
WITHOUT LEARNING BATTLE SKILL! A
LIGHTNING STROKE OF HIS FOREHOOF
STRUCK THE BLACK FULL ON THE FOREHEAD."



"NO SECOND BLOW WAS NEEDED! SLOWLY,
THE GAUNT FORM OF THE BLACK CRUMPLED...
THE MAG LIGHT DIED OUT OF HIS EYES..."



"SYLVAN SHIFTED AT HIS ENEMY."



"---AND TURNED AWAY, TRUMPETING HIS VICTORY TO HIS FRIGHTENED HERD---STRENGTH
AND PRIDE IN EVERY ROYAL LINE OF HIM!"





"ABOUT TO SLEEP AND FALL, HE SAW IT
 DROPPED HIM FROM HIM, HE COULDN'T
 UNDERSTAND IT!"



"HE FINALLY CLIMBED
 ONTO THE GOLD BANK"



"AND CALLED OUTSTRAIN,
 WHISTLED FOR HIS MOTHER"



"MOTHER WAS WAITING FOR HIM—ON THE
 OTHER SIDE OF THE STREAM—HE
 DARED NOT GET OFF ON THE
 ONE "YEAH" FROM HIM" SHE
 CALLED TO HIM IN HORSE TALK



BUT SILVER WAS TOO ANXIOUS TO REACH HIS MOTHER'S COMFORTING FLANK! BESIDES, THE ICE HAD LOST SOME OF ITS TERROR FOR HIM! HE JUMPED---



AND CROSSED THE CREEK ON HIS CHIN---MOUSSA WONDERING AT THIS NEW AND PUZZLING PRANK!



SHE RAN HER SOFT NOSE OVER HIS QUivering LITTLE BODY, MAKING CERTAIN THAT HER YOUNGESTER HAD NO HURT. BY AND BY THE SILVER COLT STOPPED HIS TREMBLING--- BUT NEVER AS LONG AS HE LIVED. WOULD HE FORGET THE HORROR OF HIS FLIGHT FROM THE "BLACK HORSE"?



THE WINTER MONTHS SAW MOST OF THE GOOD GRASS EATEN, WHERE THE WILD HORSES RANGED--- BUT NOT UNTIL SPRING SPREADS ITS NEW CARPET OF FLOWERS FROM CLIFF TO CREEK DO THEY RETURN TO THE SCENE OF LITTLE SILVER'S FRIGHT---AND SILVER'S VICTORY!



NOW, I'LL CARRY YOUR WATER BUCKETS--- SO YOU'LL BE BACK TO THE WAGON BEFORE YOUR FOLKS WORRY ABOUT YOU



HE CERTAINLY DID, LONNY --- BUT THAT IS A STORY ALL BY ITSELF!





"AT A TROT, THEN AT A GALLOP HE HEADED FOR THE FAR END OF THE VALLEY. OUTSIDE LAY DANGER... AND ADVENTURE TO MATCH HIS FIERY SPIRIT."



"BUT NOT FAR OUTSIDE THE ENTRANCE THE SOUND OF PURSUING HOOFBEATS HALTED HIM. A FAMILIAR WHINNY DRIFTED DOWN-WIND."

"WHEE-HEE-HEE!"



"IT WAS SCAMPER... FAITHFUL LITTLE SCAMPER, WHO WAS NEVER HAPPY AWAY FROM HIS FRIEND AND HERD, SILVER!"



"SILVER LOVED THE LITTLE RASCAL! IN FACT, SCAMPER WAS THE ONLY COMPANION HE WOULD HAVE ALLOWED TO FOLLOW HIM, AS HE CLIMBED THE WILD FOOTHILLS."



"SNOW ALREADY MANTLED THE HIGH PEAKS, AND THE COLD WIND THAT BLEW DOWN FROM THEM WAS LIKE A TORCH TO SILVER'S HOT YOUNG BLOOD! IT WAS THE BREATH OF ADVENTURE."



"TWO DAYS LATER, SNOW CAME TO THE FOOTHILLS. THE TWO COLTS FRISKED ABOUT IN IT LIKE YEARLINGS... HEEDLESS OF THE WOLVES THAT DREW EVER NEARER, AND NEARER..."



"THEY HALTED IN WILD SURPRISE, AS A BLACKTAIL BUCK AND THREE DOES DRIFTED PAST IN FEATHER-LIGHT BOUNDS. THE HOWLING OF THE GRAY PACK WAS VERY NEAR NOW."

OW-OW-OO-OOOOOO!



"AS THEY BURST INTO VIEW OF THE COLTS, THE WOLVES RUSHED UP. HERE WAS A DIFFERENT GAME, QUARRY JUST WAITING TO BE PULLED DOWN!"



"AT THE GRAY LEADER'S GROWL, THE HUNTERS SLUNK INTO A CIRCLE, A RING OF DEATH! NO GAME THUS CAUGHT HAD EVER ESCAPED THEIR PACK."



"WHEN THE RING WAS COMPLETE, TWO GRAY SHADOWS BARRED IN. THE ONE TO SNAP AT SILVER'S THROAT, THE OTHER TO CUT THE CORD ABOVE SCAMPER'S HOCK."



"BUT THE SILVER GOLT MOVED WITH A LIGHTNING, DEADLY SPEED THAT THE WOLVES DID NOT EXPECT! EVEN AS HIS FOREHOOF SENT THE LEADER SPINNING, HIS STRONG JAWS BROKE DOWN LIKE A JAVELIN TO SEIZE THE SECOND KILLER BY THE SPINE."



"WITH A QUICK JERK, HE TOSSED THE LOOT AWAY WITH A BROKEN BACK."



"—THEN WHIRLED TO HELP SCAMPER
BEAT OFF HIS ATTACKERS.



"THAT WAS ENOUGH FOR THE GRAY HUNTERS!
LEAVING TWO OF THEIR NUMBER ON THE
TRAMPLED SNOW, THEY SLUNK AWAY TO PICK
UP THE TRAIL OF THE DEER, WHO WOULD RUN,
BUT COULD NOT FIGHT.



"IN THEIR HUNT FOR GRASS NOT COVERED WITH
SNOW, THE COLTS GRIFFED THROUGH THE HILLS
TO THE LOWER VALLEYS.



"AT NIGHT THEY PICKED OUT A PATCH
OF DRY BRUSH, AND SLEPT HEAD-TO-
TAIL, SHARP EARS ON GUARD FOR THE
APPROACH OF STEALTHY ENEMIES.



"ONCE OR TWICE THEY CAUGHT THE SCENT
OF AN INDIAN CAMPFIRE, AND CIRCLED IT,
DOWN-WIND! SILVER NEVER COULD FORGET
THE TIME WHEN RED HORSE HUNTERS HAD
INVADDED HIS HOME VALLEY.



"BEFORE LEAVING THE FOOTHILL
COUNTRY, THEY HAD ONE MORE
BRUSH WITH A SAVAGE ENEMY AS
THEY APPROACHED A LITTLE
STREAM TO DRINK —



"... A BULL ELK'S CHALLENGE RANG OUT LIKE A BUGLE. IT WAS THE SEASON WHEN WAPITI'S TEMPER IS LIKE SUNPOWDER, AND HIS SPEAR-POINT HORNS ARE POLISHED FOR BATTLE."



SEE-UM-KAW! URRUMH-URRUMH!

"SCAMPER PLUNGED AWAY IN FRIGHT, SNORTING FOR SILVER TO FOLLOW. BUT THE TALL GOLT STOOD HIS GROUND."



"GRITTING HIS TEETH ELK FASHION, THE BULL LEAPED FORWARD! SILVER TENSED..."



...AND AT THE LAST INSTANT WHIRLED ASIDE, TO LET THOSE POLISHED BAYONET POINTS PASS THROUGH EMPTY AIR!"



"THE BULL GRUNTED IN SURPRISE --FLOWED TO A STOP--"



URR-URRH!

"---ONLY TO TAKE BOTH HEELS OF THE SILVER GOLT FULL IN HIS FLANK! THE SLEDGE-HAMMER BLOWS KNOCKED HIM OFF HIS FEET ---"



"...IN A BAWLING HEAP, ALL THE WHO
AND THE FIGHT CAME OUT OF HIM."



"SILVER BLEW HIS NOSE LOUDLY
AS HE WATCHED HIS ANTIHERO
ANTAGONIST TURN TAIL IN PANICKY
FLIGHT! TO HIM IT WAS ALL A
HUGE JOKE."



"AS HE LOWERED HIS HEAD AND GRANK,
LITTLE SCAMPER CAME SOFTLY BACK,
HEART AGLOW WITH FRESH ADMIRATION
FOR HIS FEARLESS FRIEND."



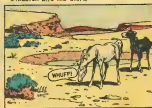
"DAY BY DAY, THE TWO MOVED DOWN FROM THE
HILLS UNTIL THEY FOUND THEMSELVES AT THE
EDGE OF THE DESERT. HERE THE GRASS WAS
SCANTY, AND THE SPIGE OF SAGEBRUSH TINGLED
IN THEIR NOSTRILS."



"BUT THERE WERE NARROW, TREE-GROWN
CANYONS THAT SHELTERED AN OCCASIONAL
WATER HOLE..."



"THERE THEY OFTEN FOUND THE TRACKS OF
OTHER WILD HORSES...AT ONE WATER HOLE,
INDIAN HORSE HUNTERS HAD JUMPED A
STALLION AND HIS BAND."



"A FEW MILES FARTHER ON, THEY CAME UPON A FEW STARTLED WARES...STRAYS FROM THE MAIN BAND THAT THE INDIANS HAD BEEN CHASING.



"SILVER LOST NO TIME IN MAKING FRIENDS WITH THE LEADERLESS 'YOUNG LADIES'—A STRANGE NEW POSSESSIVENESS FILLED HIM..."



"WITH JEALOUSY! HE SQUEALED AND SNAPPED AT SCAMPER, WARNING HIM TO LEAVE THESE NEW-FOUND FRIENDS ALONE! HE, SILVER, WOULD BE THEIR ONLY PROTECTOR!"

"SCAMPER FELT HURT! HE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THAT HIS HERO, SILVER, WAS STARTING TO GROW UP AND ACT SMART THE WAY HALF-GROWN BOYS DO IN THE PRESENCE OF GIRL FRIENDS.



"MEANWHILE, BEYOND THE NEXT MESA, APACHE HORSE HUNTERS HAD TRAPPED A WILD STALLION AND HIS BAND IN A NARROW BOX CANYON. THE WALLS WERE STEEP, BARE ROCK.

"THEY CLOSED THE ENTRANCE WITH A STOUT FENCE, TOO HIGH FOR A HORSE TO JUMP.



"THEN THEIR BEST ROPERS CLOSED IN...TO CATCH THE BLACK AND WHITE HERD LEADER! AFTER THAT, TAKING THE MARES WOULD BE EASY... THEY THOUGHT."



"BUT THE STALLION KEPT HIS HEAD! HIS MARES WERE CAUGHT...HOPELESSLY, UNLESS THEY CHOSE TO FOLLOW HIM UP THE CANYON SIDE."



"HERE DEATH WAITED FOR A SINGLE SLIP! THE MARES SAW IT AND FAILED TO FOLLOW."

WITH A LAST DESPERATE SCRAMBLE, HE REACHED THE TOP!



"AND RACED AWAY ACROSS THE MESA, TO SEEK THE FEW OF HIS BAND THAT HAD NOT ENTERED THE CANYON TRAP."

"A BREEZE SWEEPING UP THE MESA'S SIDE BROUGHT HIM THE FAR-OFF SCENT OF THOSE HE SOUGHT."



FIVE MINUTES LATER, SILVER HEARD THE BLACK AND WHITE'S TRUMPETED CHALLENGE TO BATTLE... AND ANSWERED IT.."

LIKE TWO SWORDSMEN, THEY CIRCLED EACH OTHER BEFORE CLOSING... THE BLACK AND WHITE READY TO KILL OR BE KILLED FOR HIS MARES... SILVER SCORNING TO RUN FROM AN ENEMY, NO MATTER HOW BIG AND FIERCE!



"AT THAT MOMENT CAME A GRIM INTERRUPTION! AN OLD COUGAR HAD SPOTTED SCAMPER, CLOSE BENEATH THE CLIFF.

"THE COLT'S SCREAM OF PAIN AND PANIC RANG SWIFTLY!"



"AT THE SOUND, SILVER WHEELED... ALL THOUGHT OF QUELING SOME... AWARE ONLY THAT HIS LITTLE FRIEND WAS IN MORTAL DANGER."

"STRAIGHT AT THE SNARLING CAT HE CHARGED."



"HIS SLASHING FOREHOOFS BATTERED THE KILLER FROM SCAMPER'S BACK..."



"... TO FALL ALMOST UNDER THE HOOFS OF THE PURSUING STALLION."



"THE COUGAR'S DOOM WAS SEALED! CAUGHT BY BOTH THE STALLION'S HOOFS, HE SQUALLED HIS DEATH SONG."



"SHOULDER TO SHOULDER, THE TWO COLTS, SILVER AND BLACK, HEADED BACK TO THE WATER HOLE."



"AND THERE SILVER NURSED HIS LITTLE FRIEND'S WOUNDS."



"ONCE MORE SCAMPER WAS HAPPY IN THE CLOSE COMPANIONSHIP OF HIS TALL PARTNER! TOGETHER THEY COULD FACE THE BEST AND THE WORST THAT THE WIDE WORLD HAD TO SHOW."



THAT'S A CREEK--
WHERE THE LINE OF
TREES IS---ISN'T
IT, LONE RANGER?

YES, JEANNE! IT'S NOT
VERY WIDE, BUT I'LL HAVE
TO FIND A WAY ACROSS
IT FOR THE WAGONS.

SILVER

GETS A WARNING

WHY---I THOUGHT YOU
SAID THAT IT WASN'T
VERY WIDE! IT'S A
HUNDRED FEET ACROSS,
AND DEEP!

THIS IS JUST A POND THE
BEAVERS HAVE MADE IN
THE CREEK, JEANNE! THE
STREAM ITSELF IS NARROW.

"AT THE FARTHER EDGE OF THE
POND A BEAVER'S TAIL HITS THE
WATER LIKE A GUNSHOT..."



WHAT WAS THAT
CRACKING NOISE?

A BEAVER, SLAPPING
THE WATER---AND
SILVER HAS A MIGHTY
FRIENDLY FEELING
FOR BEAVERS.

SILVER LIKES
BEAVERS, YOU
SAID HOW IS
THAT, LONE
RANGER?

WELL, IT'S QUITE A
STORY! IT STARTED
WHEN SILVER WAS A
LITTLE MORE THAN A
YEAR OLD---



"SILVER WAS OLD ENOUGH TO TAKE SHORT TRIPS AWAY FROM HIS MOTHER'S PROTECTION... AND HE DID SO, MORE AND MORE OFTEN! HIS LITTLE BROTHER, BORN THAT SPRING, TOOK MOUSSA'S ATTENTION.



"HIS FAVORITE LOOKOUT WAS A LITTLE POINT OF ASPENS THAT JUTTED OUT INTO A BEAVER POND... THERE HE COULD WATCH THE BEAVERS, SWIMMING TO AND FRO...



"...OR REPAIRING THE DAMAGE THAT SPRING FLOODS HAD DONE TO THEIR DAM.



"HE NEVER TIRED OF SEEING THOSE BUSY LITTLE LUMBERMEN FELL YOUNG TREES FOR FOOD AND BUILDING MATERIALS...THE BEAVERS NEVER MINDED HOW CLOSE HE STOOD.



"AT THE CRASH OF A FALLING TREE, THE SILVER COLT LEAPED AWAY IN PRETENDED FRIGHT.



"RETURNING, HE WOULD SHOUT AND STAMP, CHALLENGING THE BEAVER TO FURTHER PLAY."



"THEN A BROAD TAIL WOULD SLAP THE GROUND, AND THE COLT WOULD JUMP! IT WAS ALL A FRIENDLY GAME."



"ONE DAY, AFTER WATCHING THE FALL OF A LARGER TREE THAN USUAL..."



"...HE HEARD AN AGONIZED SQUEAKING AND CHATTERING FROM BENEATH THE PRONE TRUNK."



"THE MALE BEAVER'S MATE LAY PINNED UNDER THE TREE...CAUGHT WHEN IT FELL! SILVER WANTED TO HELP, BUT HE COULDN'T THINK HOW."



"THE TREE WAS CLEARLY TO BLAME! EXPERIMENTALLY, SILVER TOOK A BRANCH IN HIS TEETH AND PULLED! THE TREE MOVED A LITTLE, AND HE PULLED HARDER."



"SUDDENLY THE TREE ROLLED OVER, WITH A SWISH."



"THE MALE BEAVER LICKED HIS MATE'S FACE. SLOWLY, SHE MOVED ASIDE! SHE WAS NOT MUCH HURT, AFTER ALL.



"SOON THEY WERE BACK AT WORK, WITH LOW, CONTENTED CHIRPINGS."



"LATE THAT SUMMER, A LEAN OLD WOLF CAME DOWN INTO WILD HORSE VALLEY, IN HOPES OF KILLING A STRAY COLT.



"HE FOUND ALL THE SMALL COLTS HUGGING CLOSE TO THEIR MOTHERS' PROTECTING SIDES... AND LICKED HIS LEAN CHOPS IN DISAPPOINTMENT.



"DESPERATELY HUNGRY, HE MADE FOR THE CREEK THERE HE MIGHT SURPRISE AN UNBARY FROG---OR EVEN A MUSKRAT! OR PERHAPS A BEAVERS.



"INSTEAD, HE SAW SOMETHING THAT MADE HIS EYES GLAZE WITH FIERCE DESIRE... A FAT YEARLING WITH A SILVER COAT, ALONE AND HELPLESS!



"THE LEAN, OLD LOBO SANK ONTO HIS BELLY AMONG THE UNDERGROWTH AND BEGAN TO CRAWL FORWARD.



"TO THE WISE OLD BEAVERS, THE TREMBLING OF THE TALL WEEDS BEHIND SILVER MEANT DANGER!



"...AND WHIRLED TO FACE AN EQUALLY STARTLED WOLF!



"BUT BRIGHT, BEADY EYES CLOSE TO SHORE SAW WHAT SILVER DID NOT.



"LIKE TWO PISTOL SHOTS THEIR TAILS CRACKED THE POND... THE BEAVER'S WELL-KNOWN WARNING! SILVER JUMPED..."



"A SECOND LATER, THE LOBO WAS SLIDING FORWARD, TEETH BARED FOR THE ATTACK! SILVER'S CALL FOR HELP RANG OUT LOUD AND SHRILL."



"AND HIS MOTHER MOUSSA REPLIED, AS SHE GATHERED HERSELF TO RACE TO HIS AID."



"NO LONGER MOUSSA THE GENTLE, SHE GROVE INTO THE ASPENS LIKE A WHITE THUNDERBOLT! NO PACK OF WOLVES COULD HAVE STOPPED HER!"



"KNOWING WELL THE FURY OF A FIGHTING MARE, THE OLD WOLF MADE ONE HALF-HEARTED SLASH AT YOUNG SILVER! HIS GAZE WAS UP, BUT HE WAS TOO ANGRY TO CUIT ...



"UNTIL HE SAW MOUSSA CHARGING DOWN ON HIM!"



"AS HE TURNED TO FLEE, SILVER'S SMALL, HARD HOOF DROVE AT HIS RUMP."



"THEN HE WAS RUNNING FOR HIS LIFE, ONE SHORT JUMP AHEAD OF RAGING MOUSSA."



"FAR OUT INTO THE POND HE LEAPED!"



"WET AND DISGUSTED, THE OLD LORD CLIMBED OUT ON THE OTHER SIDE. IT WOULD BE SOME TIME BEFORE HE GOT HIS APPETITE BACK... FOR COLTS OR BEAVERS!"



"THE TWO BEAVERS, SWIMMING DEEP, LOOKED UP AT THE LONG-LEGGED INTRUDER WITH BRIGHT, DISGAINFUL EYES! THEIR LONG, WOODCUTTING TEETH COULD HAVE CUT HIM INTO BITS... BUT THEY ONLY ASKED TO BE LET ALONE."



"MOUSSA MADE SURE THAT HER YEARLING SON WAS UNHARMED, BEFORE SHE TURNED BACK TO HER NEW BABY... AND THE OLD BEAVERS SWAM BACK TO TAKE UP THEIR WOODCUTTING."



"WITH HIS TWO FLAT-TAILED AND KIDNEY-EYED FRIENDS ON GUARD, SILVER NOW FELT SAFER THAN EVER! ALL HIS LIFE HE WOULD REMEMBER HOW THEIR WARNING SAVED HIM FROM A DEADLY ENEMY."



"DID THE OLD LORD EVER COME BACK TO WILD HORSE VALLEY AFTER THAT?"

"YES, JEANNE... BUT THAT IS ANOTHER STORY! WE MUST HURRY NOW AND FIND A GOOD CROSSING FOR THE WAGON TRAIN THEY'RE DEPENDING ON US, YOU KNOW!"



RANGER! WHY ARE YOU
LOOKING WAY OFF AT THE
SKYLINE TODAY? IS
THERE DANGER FROM
THE INDIANS?

NO, LONNY!
SOMETHING WORSE!

SILVER

LEADS TO FREEDOM



THE PRAIRIE GRASS IS SO DRY, RIGHT NOW,
THAT ANYTHING COULD START IT BLAZING...
AND ONCE STARTED, IT COULD BURN THIS
WAGON TRAIN! THERE'D BE
NO STOPPING IT! I'VE SUGGESTED
"NO SMOKING" BY ANY
MAN IN THE
OUTFIT!



BUT THE DRIVER OF THE LAST WAGON
TAKES A CHANCE.

JIM HOSKINS! THAT'S
AGAINST THE RULES—

HUSH YOUR
FACE, WOMAN!
(PUFF! PUFF! PUFF!)



THE LONE RANGER'S WAY
AHEAD--- HE'LL NEVER KNOW!



LOOK! BACK THERE!
IT'S SMOKE!

A GRASS FIRE!





SOME COMANCHE HORSE HUNTERS SET FIRE
TO THE GRASS AT ONE END OF WILD HORSE
VALLEY, YOUNG SILVER'S HOME.

A STRONG WIND CARRIED THE
FIRE DESTRUCTION SWIFTLY FROM
THE VALLEY'S NARROW ENTRANCE.



"SYLVAN, THE WILD HORSE KING, ROUNDED UP HIS BAND. SILVER AND THE OTHER TWO-YEAR-OLDS SAW THEM STREAMING PAST—"



"... AND JOINED THE HOOT! BLACK SCAMPER STUCK TO HIS FRINDS, SILVER LIKE A BURE."



"AT THE OTHER END OF THE VALLEY, MORE COMANCHES LEAPED SUDDENLY FROM HIDING, WHIPPING AND WAVING BLANKETS TO TURN THE WILD HORSE BAND."



"STRAIGHT INTO THE MOUTH OF A NARROW, ROCKY CANYON THEY DROVE—WHERE THE WALLS WERE TOO STEEP TO CLIMB."



"BEFORE THEY KNEW IT, THE LEADING MARES AND COLTS WERE HEADING INTO THE WINGS OF A WILD HORSE TRAP."



"BUT BEFORE THE BULK OF THE HERD HAD ENTERED THE HIDDEN GATE, SYLVAN SPOTTED IT! HIS HARD NOOFS BRAKED HIS SPEED."



"HE WHIRLED, BITING AND SOMERSALTING, TO TURN HIS MARES BACK IN TIME."



"THEN, DASHING INTO THE LEAD, HE CHARGED THE SAVAGE HUNTERS--- WITH SILVER AND SCAMPER AT HIS FLANK."



"THE STARTLED INDIANS JUMPED FOR THEIR LIVES--- LET THE WILD HORSE BAND FOUR FAST THEM---"



"THROUGH A WALL OF CHOKING SMOKE, THE GREAT WILD LEADER TOOK HIS FOLLOWERS! BUT THE RED FLAMES HAD PASSED..."



"--- LEAVING NOTHING BUT BLACK, SCORCHED EARTH! SYLVAN DID NOT HESITATE--- DID NOT LET HIS BAND PAUSE OR REST! ONLY OUTSIDE THEIR RUINED VALLEY WOULD LIFE BE POSSIBLE."

"BACK IN THE CANYON TRAP, MOUSSA, THE WHITE MARE, AND A FEW OTHERS HURLED THEMSELVES IN VAIN AGAINST STOUT LOG WALLS."



"SILVER AND SCAMPER ALSO WERE MISSING FROM THE WILD KING'S BAND. IT WAS SILVER'S NOTION--- TO COOL HIS HOT, SMARTING FEET IN THE CREEK.



"HERE THE CREEK BROADENED OUT, AND A TINY ISLET, UNTOUCHED BY THE FIRE, INVITED THE SWIMMING COLTS.



"HERE THEY SPENT THE REST OF THAT TRAGIC DAY, PEERING OUT THROUGH THEIR GREEN AND WATERY SHELTER. NEAR SUNDOWN, THEY SAW ---



"---MOUSRA AND THE OTHER MARES CAME OUT OF THE CANYON, FOOT-ROPED AND RIDEN BY THEIR RED-SKINNED ENEMIES.



"THAT NIGHT, SILVER AND SCAMPER TOOK THE TRAIL OF THE CAPTIVES. IN THE WHITE COLT BURNED AN ANGER AGAINST THE CREATURES WHO HAD STOLEN HIS MOTHER AND HIS FRIENDS.



"SEVERAL MILES FROM THE VALLEY, HE FOUND THEM, CAMPED CLOSE TO THE CAPTURED MARES! SILVER WAS TOO WISE TO CALL OUT.



"ON SILENT FEET, AVOIDING THE HORSE GUARD, SILVER REACHED THE CORRAL --- HE REACHED OUT TO TOUCH THE SOFT NOSE --- ASSURE HER THAT SHE WOULD BE FREED IN A MOMENT."



"MOUSSA HAD TRIED TO CHEW THROUGH THE ROPE, BUT HER TEETH WERE DULLED WITH AGE SHE THEREFORE FAILED WHERE SILVER, WITH YOUNG, SHARP TEETH SUCCEEDED."



"WHILE STRENGTH CAME BACK INTO MOUSSA'S CRAMPED LEG, SHE WATCHED HIM TACKLE THE TOP ROPE OF THE CORRAL."



"AT MOUSSA'S LUNGE, IT SNAPPED! BEHIND HER, THE SMALL COLTS BUNCHED UP, WHINNYING."



"WITH A STARTLED YELL, THE HORSE GUARD HEARD THE RUSH AND JUMPED TO HALT IT."



"--- BUT OUT OF THE NIGHT, A SHADOWY TERROR LOOMED! BRAVE SCAMPER STRUCK A BLOW FOR HIS FRIENDS!"



"ABOVE THE STORM OF HOOFEATS, FADING INTO NIGHT, CAME YOUNG SILVER'S TAUNTING BUGLE CALL! THE COMANCHES DANCED IN HELPLESS FURY."



"THE NEXT MORNING THE NEXT--SILVER LED HIS MARES IN A CIRCLE, SEEKING TO PICK UP THE SCENT OF SILVER'S HERD."



"ON THE THIRD DAY, HE SIGHTED THE LITTLE BUNCH OF BACHELORS GRAZING BY THEMSELVES. THEY CAUGHT SILVER'S SCENT AND CALLED."



"SILVER THE MIGHTY SPOTTED THE NEWCOMERS-- AND LEFT HIS MARES TO INVESTIGATE! NO RIVAL LEADER COULD TRESPASS ON HIS TERRITORY."



"WITH JEALOUS SQUEALING AND SNORTING, HE ROUNDED UP THE MISSING MEMBERS OF HIS BAND--- MOUSSA THE GENTLE, AND THE LITTLE COLTS--- PAYING NO ATTENTION AT ALL TO THE PAIR OF BACHELORS WHO HAD BROUGHT THEM BACK."



"BUT THAT DID NOT BOTHER SILVER AT ALL, FOR HE WAS STILL A HAPPY GO LUCKY YOUNG BACHELOR! TO RUN AND PLAY AND FEED WITH SCAMPER, AND TO KNOW THAT ALL WAS WELL WITH HIS FRIENDS-- THAT WAS PURE HAPPINESS FOR THE YOUTHFUL PRINCE OF WILD HORSE VALLEY."

